



March 5, 2015

**Testimony of
Jennifer Jennings, Executive Director
Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association
Before the
Labor & Public Employees Committee
Opposing
House Bill 6784, An Act Expanding Paid Sick Leave**

2015

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The Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC) submits the following comments opposing HB-6784, "An Act Expanding Paid Sick Leave":

Our members generally provide heating and cooling services in the residential and small to mid-sized commercial markets. We are very concerned that this bill imposes a burdensome workplace mandate on the smallest of our employers and this poses particular concerns for our industry.

Many heating and cooling companies invest significant time and resources into training apprentices. Beginning apprentices generally don't have the skills to contribute significantly to the job. Each apprentice on the job site also has to be closely supervised by a licensed journeyperson. Employers are also required to pay apprentices good wages with built-in increases, which are subject to the approval of the state Department of Labor. Adding the cost of paid leave on top of other apprenticeship training costs may discourage some employers from providing apprentices with hands-on training opportunities.

The cyclical nature of the construction industry also makes a one-size-fits-all sick leave mandate particularly burdensome. In the construction industry, workers are sometimes hired to perform work for a limited duration on a particular job. Contractors that bid on construction projects have to have some certainty as to what their labor costs will be in order to accurately bid the project and meet project deadlines. If workers are out sick, replacements need to be hired to keep the job on track. Consequently, the construction trades, including union shops, often institute "No Show, No Pay" policies.

Finally, the last thing Connecticut's fragile economy needs right now is another strike against already high costs and negative rankings as a state in which to do business. Our industry needs confident home and business owners with positive cash flow to make HVAC purchases and upgrades in order for contractors to provide good paying jobs. Unfortunately bills like HB-6784 will not help in this regard.

For these reasons, we ask you to oppose any further expansion of Connecticut's paid leave law and please **REJECT HB-6784**.

CHCC is a trade association whose objectives are to strengthen and further trade relations, attract, educate and train necessary manpower, represent members at all levels of government and review and establish quality standards and procedures. The association represents over 125 Heating & Cooling Companies in Connecticut as well as associate and affiliate member manufacturers, wholesale suppliers, dealers and other HVAC related firms, technical school instructors and building officials.